

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

GUIDANCE NOTES – Updated 18th Dec 2019

**** APPLIES TO ALL NEW APPRENTICESHIP STARTS FROM 01/02/2019 AND THOSE CURRENTLY ON PROGRAMME AND NOT YET SUBMITTED FOR CERTIFICATION ****

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PLEASE NOTE:

Qualifications in **orange** and marked with an asterix (*) are ones that are currently listed in SASW.

At the discretion of the Certifying Authority, all other qualifications listed are acceptable alternatives.

INTRODUCTION

In addition to the details within SASW, the following sections of this guidance document provide further clarity regarding the discretion that the Certifying Authority have in accepting qualifications for the English and Maths requirements of SASW Apprenticeships.

Following discussions with Welsh Government officials, they have confirmed that they are content for the Certifying Authority to use their discretion to accept regulated qualifications that are equivalent, or higher, than those stated in SASW for English and Maths. This means that qualifications that were previously unacceptable as part of a SASW framework completion, can now be used at the discretion of the relevant Certifying Authority.

Please note, however, that there are currently **no proxies for Digital Literacy** and the list of acceptable qualifications remains unchanged.

The following guidance lists the current list of acceptable SASW qualifications and those that can be used at the discretion of the Certifying Authority.

PLEASE NOTE:

Qualifications in **orange** and marked with an asterix (*) are ones that are currently listed in SASW.

At the discretion of the Certifying Authority, all other qualifications listed are acceptable alternatives.

FOUNDATION (LEVEL 2)

PLEASE NOTE:

Qualifications in **orange** and marked with an asterix (*) are ones that are currently listed in SASW.

At the discretion of the Certifying Authority, all other qualifications listed are acceptable alternatives.

FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP - ENGLISH

Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable
* Essential Communication Skills or Essential Skills Wales in Communication	Min'm L1	✓	
* GCSE/IGCSE English - any with English in the title. Including :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Literature, English Language, English Studies English Communication • Welsh Language • Short courses, Pilot courses • Double Awards (minimum grade acceptable EF) <p><i>NOT acceptable is English as a Second Language</i></p>	Min'm Grade 1 or Min'm Grade G	✓	
* Functional Skills – English	Min'm L1	✓	
* A/AS Level English - any with English in the title. Including: - English Language, English Literature or English Language and Literature, Welsh Language	Min'm Grade E or pre 1986 A Level "O" grade (= <i>Ordinary Grade equivalent</i>)	✓	
* O Level English, English Language, English Literature or English Language and Literature	Min'm Grade E or pre 1975 evidence of a Pass	✓	
* Key Skills Communication / Literacy <small>Welsh Key Skills only consist of portfolio. English Key Skills require achievement of test AND portfolio</small>	Min'm L1	✓	
Basic Skills Certificate L1 - Certificate in Adult Literacy	Min'm L1	✓	
CSE English	2 or 3	✓	
Pre U Certificate Literature in English	P3	✓	
Northern Ireland Certificate in Essential Skills Communication	Min'm L1	✓	
British Sign Language - regulated qualification (ONLY where British Sign Language is the Apprentice's primary language)	Min'm L1 or Min'm SCQF L4	✓	
Scottish Advanced Higher in English (SCQF Level 7)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
Scottish Higher in English (SCQF Level 6)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
* Scottish National 4 in English (SCQF Level 4)	Pass	✓	
Scottish Intermediate 1 in English (SCQF Level 4)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
Scottish Standard Grade General in English (SCQF Level 4)	Min'm Grade 3	✓	
Scottish National Certificate Unit Communication (SCQF Level 6)	Pass	✓	
* Scottish Core Skill Unit in Communication (SCQF Level 4)	Pass	✓	

FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP - ENGLISH				
Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable	
Scottish Workplace Core Skill Unit in Communication (SCQF Level 4) <small>Oral Communication AND Written Communication</small>	Pass	✓		
Scottish National Unit in Literacy (SCQF Level 4)	Pass	✓		
Scottish Ordinary Grade in English (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade C	✓		
IBO Middle Years Programme Level 1/2 Certificate in Language & Literature	Min'm Grade 2	✓		
International Baccalaureate Diploma Standard or Higher Level Qualification in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English A: Literature or; English A: Language & Literature or; English Literature and Performance 	Min'm Grade 3	✓		
Overseas qualification are acceptable with clear evidence from ENIC (a certificate/statement of comparability)** that qualification is an equivalent level to the min'm SASW requirements and additional information that confirms qualification is equivalent to GCSE A* - C.	Min'm Grade equivalent to GCSE A* - C	✓		
Welsh Baccalaureate - ONLY where ESW or ESQ Communication element is demonstrated	Min'm Level 1	✓		
International Certificate of Christian Education – ICCE (General or Advanced)	Min'm Grade E	✓		
GCSE English or Welsh as a Second Language				X
Access to Higher Education Diplomas				X
FE Access Programmes in Literacy			X	
GNVQs			X	
Qualifications that are nation specific to other countries - unless supported by a suitable ENIC statement			X	

** For an example of a suitable ENIC Statement of Comparability, please refer to Additional Evidence Types Guidance section of the ACW Acceptable Evidence web pages.

FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP - MATHS

Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable
* Essential Application of Number Skills or Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	Min'm L1	✓	
* GCSE/IGCSE Maths - any with Maths in the title. Including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short course, Pilot courses • Double Awards (minimum acceptable EF) • Linear Maths, Modular Maths • Application of Maths • Methods in Mathematics • Additional Maths • Use of Mathematics 	Min'm Grade 1 or Min'm Grade G	✓	
* Functional Skills – Maths	Min'm L1	✓	
* A/AS Level Maths - any with Maths in the title. Including: Pure Maths, Further Maths, Use of Maths	Min'm Grade E or pre 1986 A Level "O" grade (= <i>Ordinary Grade equivalent</i>)	✓	
* O Level Mathematics	Min'm Grade E or pre 1975 evidence of a Pass	✓	
* Key Skills Application of Number (Numeracy) <small>Welsh Key Skills only consist of portfolio. English Key Skills require achievement of test AND portfolio</small>	Min'm L1	✓	
Basic Skills Certificate Level 1 – Certificate in Adult Numeracy	Min'm L1	✓	
Northern Ireland Certificate in Essential Skills Application of Number	Min'm L1	✓	
CSE Mathematics	Min'm 2 or 3	✓	
Core Maths Level 3 (where included in performance tables) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematical Studies • Using and Applying Mathematics • Quantitative Problem Solving • Quantitative Reasoning • Mathematics in Context • Mathematics for Work and Life 	Min'm Grade E	✓	
Level 2 Freestanding Mathematics qualification - Foundations of Advanced Mathematics	Min'm Grade E	✓	
Pre U Certificate in Mathematics or Further Mathematics	Min'm P3	✓	
Scottish Advanced Higher in Mathematics (SCQF Level 7)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
Scottish Higher in Mathematics (SCQF Level 6)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
* Scottish National 4 in Mathematics or Life Skills Mathematics or Applications of Mathematics (SCQF Level 4)	Pass	✓	
Scottish Intermediate 1 in Mathematics (SCQF Level 4)	Min'm Grade C	✓	

FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP - MATHS

FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP - MATHS				
Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable	
Scottish Standard Grade General in Mathematics (SCQF Level 4)	Min'm 3	✓		
* Scottish Core Skill Unit in Numeracy (SCQF Level 4) <small>Graphical Information AND Using Number</small>	Pass	✓		
Scottish Workplace Core Skill Unit in Numeracy (SCQF Level 4)	Pass	✓		
Scottish National Unit in Numeracy (SCQF Level 4)	Pass	✓		
Scottish Ordinary Grade in Mathematics (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade C	✓		
IBO Middle Years Programme Level 1/2 Certificate in Mathematics or Mathematics-Extended	Min'm Grade 2	✓		
International Baccalaureate Diploma Standard or Higher Level Qualification in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mathematical Studies or; Mathematics or; Further Mathematics 	Min'm Grade 3	✓		
Overseas qualification are acceptable with clear evidence from ENIC (a certificate/statement of comparability)** that qualification is an equivalent level to the min'm SASW requirements and additional information that confirms qualification is equivalent to GCSE A* - C.	Min'm Grade equivalent to GCSE A* - C	✓		
International Certificate of Christian Education – ICCE (General or Advanced) Mathematics	Min'm Grade E	✓		
Welsh Baccalaureate - ONLY where ESW or ESQ Application of Number element is demonstrated	Min'm Level 1	✓		
Access to Higher Education Diplomas, Adult Numeracy Certificates			X	
FE Access Programmes in Numeracy			X	
GNVQs			X	
Qualifications that are nation specific to other countries - unless supported by a suitable ENIC statement				X

** For an example of a suitable ENIC Statement of Comparability, please refer to Additional Evidence Types Guidance section of the ACW Acceptable Evidence web pages.

FOUNDATION APPRENTICESHIP - DIGITAL LITERACY/ICT/IT

Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Essential Skills Wales/Essential Skills Qualification in Digital Literacy/ICT	Min'm L1	✓	
<p>PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE ARE NO FURTHER ACCEPTABLE PROXIES FOR DIGITAL LITERACY/ ICT/IT REQUIREMENTS</p> <p><u>For example the following are NOT acceptable:</u> - GCSEs, A/AS Levels, O Levels, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Welsh Baccalaureate, GNVQs, Access to Higher Education Diplomas, BTIC, DiDA, CLAIT, ECDL</p>			X

APPRENTICESHIP (Level 3)

PLEASE NOTE:

Qualifications in **orange** and marked with an asterix (*) are ones that are currently listed in SASW.

At the discretion of the Certifying Authority, all other qualifications listed are acceptable alternatives.

APPRENTICESHIP - ENGLISH

Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable
* Essential Communication Skills or Essential Skills Wales in Communication	Min'm L2	✓	
* GCSE/IGCSE English - any with English in the title. Including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Literature • Welsh Language • Short courses, Pilot courses • Double Awards (minimum grade acceptable CD) • English Language • English Studies • English Communication NOT acceptable is English as a Second Language	Min'm Grade 4 or Min'm Grade C	✓	
* Functional Skills – English	Min'm L2	✓	
* A/AS Level English - any with English in the title. Including: - English Language, English Literature or English Language and Literature, Welsh Language	Min'm Grade E or pre 1986 A Level "O" grade (= Ordinary Grade equivalent)	✓	
* Key Skills Communication/Literacy <small>Welsh Key Skills only consist of portfolio. English Key Skills require achievement of test AND portfolio</small>	Min'm Level 2	✓	
Basic Skills Certificate L2 – Certificate in Adult Literacy	Min'm Level 2	✓	
* O Level English, English Language, English Literature or English Language and Literature	Min'm Grade C or pre 1975 evidence of a Pass	✓	
CSE English	Min'm Grade 1	✓	
Pre U Certificate Literature in English	P3	✓	
Northern Ireland Certificate in Essential Skills Communication	Min'm Level 2	✓	
British Sign Language - regulated qualifications (ONLY where British Sign Language is the Apprentice's primary language)	Min'm Level 2 or SCQF Level 5	✓	
Scottish Advanced Higher in English (SCQF Level 7)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
Scottish Higher in English (SCQF Level 6)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
* Scottish National 5 in English (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade D	✓	
Scottish Intermediate 2 in English (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
Scottish Standard Grade Credit in English (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade 2	✓	
Scottish National Certificate Unit Communication (SCQF Level 6)	Pass	✓	
* Scottish Core Skill Unit in Communication (SCQF Level 5) <small>Oral Communication AND Written Communication</small>	Pass	✓	
Scottish Workplace Core Skill Unit in Communication (SCQF Level 5)	Pass	✓	
Scottish National Unit Literacy (SCQF Level 5)	Pass	✓	

APPRENTICESHIP - ENGLISH			
Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Scottish Ordinary Grade in English (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
IBO Middle Years Programme Level 1/2 Certificate in Language and Literature	Min'm Grade 3	✓	
International Baccalaureate Diploma Standard or Higher Level Qualification in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English A: Literature or; English A: Language & Literature or; English Literature and Performance 	Min'm Grade 3	✓	
Overseas qualification are acceptable with clear evidence from ENIC (a certificate/statement of comparability)** that qualification is an equivalent level to the min'm SASW requirements and additional information that confirms qualification is equivalent to GCSE A* - C.	Min'm Grade equivalent to GCSE A* - C	✓	
International Certificate of Christian Education – ICCE (General or Advanced) English	Min'm Grade E	✓	
Welsh Baccalaureate - ONLY where ESW or ESQ Communication element is demonstrated	Min'm Level 2	✓	
GCSE English or Welsh as a Second Language			X
Access to Higher Education Diplomas			X
FE Access Programmes in Literacy			X
GNVQs			X
Qualifications that are nation specific to other countries - unless supported by a suitable ENIC statement			X

** For an example of a suitable ENIC Statement of Comparability, please refer to Additional Evidence Types Guidance section of the ACW Acceptable Evidence web pages.

APPRENTICESHIP - MATHS

Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable
* Essential Application of Number Skills or Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	Min'm L2	✓	
* GCSE/IGCSE Maths - any with Maths in the title. Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short courses, Pilot courses • Double Awards (minimum acceptable CD) • Linear Maths, Modular Maths • Application of Maths • Methods in Mathematics • Additional Maths • Use of Mathematics 	Min'm Grade 4 or Min'm Grade C	✓	
* Functional Skills – Maths	Min'm L2	✓	
* A/AS Level Maths - any with Maths in the title. Including: Pure Maths, Further Maths, Use of Maths	Min'm Grade E or pre 1986 A Level "O" grade (= Ordinary Grade equivalent)	✓	
* O Level Mathematics	Min'm Grade C or pre 1975 evidence of a Pass	✓	
* Key Skills Application of Number (Numeracy) <small>Welsh Key Skills only consist of portfolio. English Key Skills require achievement of test AND portfolio</small>	Min'm L2	✓	
Basic Skills Certificate L2 – Certificate in Adult Numeracy	Min'm L2	✓	
Northern Ireland Certificate in Essential Skills Application of Number	Min'm L2	✓	
CSE Mathematics	Min'm 1	✓	
Core Maths Level 3 (where included in performance tables) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematical Studies • Using and Applying Mathematics • Quantitative Problem Solving • Quantitative Reasoning • Mathematics in Context • Mathematics for Work and Life 	Min'm Grade E	✓	
Level 2 Freestanding Mathematics - Foundations of Advanced Mathematics	Min'm Grade C	✓	
Pre U Certificate in Mathematics or Further Mathematics	Min'm P3	✓	
Scottish Advanced Higher in Mathematics (SCQF Level 7)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
Scottish Higher in Mathematics (SCQF Level 6)	Min'm Grade C	✓	
*Scottish National 5 in Mathematics or Life Skills Mathematics or Applications of Mathematics (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade D	✓	
Scottish Intermediate 2 in Mathematics (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade C	✓	

APPRENTICESHIP - MATHS

Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Scottish Standard Grade Credit in Mathematics (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm 2		
* Scottish Core Skill Unit in Numeracy (SCQF Level 5) <small>Graphical Information AND Using Number</small>	Pass		
Scottish Workplace Core Skill Unit in Numeracy (SCQF Level 5)	Pass		
Scottish National Unit in Numeracy (SCQF Level 5)	Pass		
Scottish Ordinary Grade in Mathematics (SCQF Level 5)	Min'm Grade C		
IBO Middle Years Programme Level 1/2 Certificate in Mathematics or Mathematics-Extended	Min'm Grade 3		
International Baccalaureate Diploma Standard or Higher Level Qualification in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematical Studies or; • Mathematics or; • Further Mathematics 	Min'm Grade 3		
Overseas qualification are acceptable with clear evidence from ENIC (a certificate/statement of comparability)** that qualification is an equivalent level to the min'm SASW requirements and additional information that confirms qualification is equivalent to GCSE A*-C.	Min'm Grade equivalent to GCSE A* - C		
International Certificate of Christian Education – ICCE (General or Advanced) Mathematics	Min'm Grade E		
Welsh Baccalaureate - ONLY where ESW or ESQ Application of Number element is demonstrated	Min'm Level 2		
Access to Higher Education Diplomas, Adult Numeracy Certificates			X
FE Access Programmes in Numeracy			X
GNVQs			X
Qualifications that are nation specific to other countries - unless supported by a suitable ENIC statement			X

** For an example of a suitable ENIC Statement of Comparability, please refer to Additional Evidence Types Guidance section of the ACW Acceptable Evidence web pages.

APPRENTICESHIP - DIGITAL LITERACY/IT/ICT			
Qualification	Level/Grade Criteria	Acceptable	Unacceptable
*Essential Skills Wales/Essential Skills Qualification in Digital Literacy/ICT	Min'm L2	✓	
<p>PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE ARE NO FURTHER ACCEPTABLE PROXIES FOR DIGITAL LITERACY/ ICT/IT REQUIREMENTS</p> <p>For example the following are NOT acceptable: - GCSEs, A/AS Levels, O Levels, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Welsh Baccalaureate, GNVQs, Access to Higher Education Diplomas,BTIC, DiDA, CLAIT, ECDL</p>			X

HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP (Level 4-7)

Generally, Essential Skill requirements for a Higher Apprenticeship are the same as those for at Apprenticeship Level 3.

However, as these are **minimum** SASW requirements, please refer to each framework document to confirm if achievement at a **higher level** has been specified by the sector.

Where a framework states requirement for **ESW at Level 3**, the Welsh Government have agreed that we can accept an A/AS Level (in the appropriate subject) at minimum Grade E, as an acceptable proxy.